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COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
Tuesday, March 17, 2015 2:00 P.M., CONFERENCE ROOM 325
SB 508, SD1 Relating to Campaign finance
TESTIMONY
Beppie Shapiro, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Buenaventura, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports SB508 SD1 which would improve the usefulness of Campaign Spending Reports by requiring earlier submission of preliminary reports prior to a general election.

Currently these reports are due ten days prior to the election. This gives the Campaign Spending Commission (CSC) too little time to analyze the many reports and if desired to publicize their data or implications so the public can be aware of funding and spending particulars which might influence voters' decisions at the polls. A major value of these reports is this kind of information, and SB508 SD1's requirement of earlier report submission will address an important defect in the reporting system.

We are happy to note that SD1 corrects a potential problem with the original bill, in that spending during the last several weeks of the campaign will continue to be reported as it is currently. Since a lot of spending often happens at the end of a campaign, SD1 will allow voters and analysts to examine this spending before Election Day.

We urge you to pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



House Judiciary Committee
Chair Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair Joy San Buenaventura

Tuesday 03/17/2015 at 2:00 PM in Room 325
SB508 Relating to Campaign Finance

TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT
Carmille Lim, Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair San Buenaventura and Committee members:

Common Cause Hawaii supports SB508, which would require noncandidate committees to file preliminary reports on October 1 of a general election year in addition to ten days prior to the general election.

The 2014 election cycle had an unprecedented amount of “outside” money spent in Hawaii elections -- As of October 30, 2014, just days before the general election Campaign Spending Reports showed that:

- \$10,168,732 Super PAC money was already spent on ballot initiatives.
- \$5.9 million Super PAC money was spent on opposing/supporting candidates.

Media reports confirmed that voters were getting inundated with mailers from noncandidate committees -- independent groups -- urging voters to cast their ballot a certain way. This only increased as we got closer to Election Day. Currently, the Campaign Spending Commission requires these noncandidate committees (particularly the Super PACS -- also known as “independent” groups, “outside” groups) file reports indicating how much they spend, 10 days before a general election. This is not sufficient in educating voters who are interested in knowing this information, as there is a trend of people who cast their ballot by mail, or by early walk-in voting, which starts before the current filing deadline. In order to ensure a transparent election whereby noncandidate committees disclose their spending in time educate early voters, we support adding an October 1st noncandidate committee preliminary (campaign spending) report deadline.

For consistency, we ask the committee to also make the additional preliminary report filing applicable to candidate committees.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify **in support of SB508**.

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nancy Davlantes	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
christine trecker	Individual	Support	No

Comments: This bill is an important step toward transparency in Hawaii elections. Major reforms are needed to rein in out-of control spending by noncandidate committees and until these reforms are enacted, strengthening the reporting requirements of these committees is a must.

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Amy Brinker	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE



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**STATE OF HAWAII
CAMPAIGN SPENDING COMMISSION**

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March 16, 2015

TO: The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

Members of the House Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Kristin Izumi-Nitao, Executive Director *Kei*
Campaign Spending Commission

SUBJECT: **Testimony on S.B. No. 508, S.D. 1, Relating to Campaign Finance**

Tuesday, March 17, 2015
2:00 p.m., Conference Room 325

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill. The Campaign Spending Commission ("Commission") supports the intent of this bill.

This bill amends Hawaii Revised Statutes ("HRS") §11-336(a), by adding an additional preliminary report due prior to the general election for noncandidate committees. Presently, noncandidate committees must file a disclosure report 10 calendar days prior to the general election. This measure would require noncandidate committees to file an additional preliminary general report on October 1st of a general election year.